

West Central Minnesota Food Council

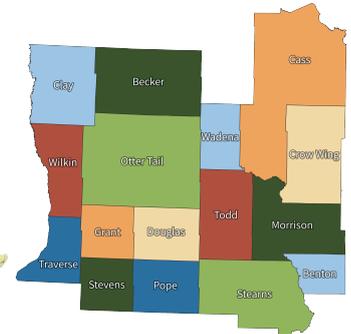
2025 Impact Snapshot
Advancing an equitable,
climate-smart, and resilient
regional food system.

WHO WE ARE + WHAT MOVED

OUR ROLE IN THE REGION

In 2025, the West Central Food Council served as both a regional backbone and an on-the-ground implementer—convening partners, piloting solutions, and directing resources where they could make the greatest triple-bottom line impact - social, economic, and environmental. We moved ideas into action while strengthening the systems that sustain long-term change.

NOW SERVING 16 COUNTIES



2025 AT-A-GLANCE

Increased from **4 to 16** counties with support from MDH funding Sep. 1

222 participants engaged via Sustainable Ag Webinar Series featuring

over **14** local farms and orgs

[YouTube channel](#) created with

4 videos published

[Local Food Recovery Guide](#) published

5,400 pounds of food rescued by regional food pantries

Food hub [feasibility study](#) completed

New [multi-year funding](#) secured



2. COORDINATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

- Mini-grants enabled food pantries to implement food rescue plans
- Supported build of educational hydroponics system with Boys & Girls Club in Detroit Lakes
- Practical tools turned planning into action

3. DIRECT INVESTMENT

- Feasibility study for a food hub in Fergus Falls
- Guest speakers and experts embedded into council learning
- Created communications & branding assets for Council

HOW WE CREATED ACCESS & CAPACITY:

1. EDUCATION & KNOWLEDGE SHARING

- Regional webinar series on starting and sustaining small food businesses
- Recordings published to extend reach

WHAT CHANGED + WHAT'S NEXT

SPOTLIGHT: WHAT MOVED BECAUSE THE COUNCIL EXISTS



REGIONAL EDUCATION AT SCALE

A multi-session webinar series supported emerging food entrepreneurs

Content archived on YouTube for ongoing access



SMALL FOOD RETAIL INVESTMENT

Good Food Access Funds supported new bulk foods section and smoothie bar installation at existing natural food store

1 of 21 awards made statewide through competitive application process



FOOD RECOVERY IN ACTION

Food pantries moved from ideas to implementation

Local food rescue plans supported by targeted mini-grants

EQUITY & REGIONAL REACH

Council membership and participation spanned the 4 counties prior to expansion, ensuring regional perspectives shape decisions. In 2025, we expanded access through free education, practical funding tools, and resources designed for organizations serving residents most impacted by food insecurity.

ALIGNMENT WITH STATEWIDE GOALS

- [Regional Food Systems Plan](#)
- [MN Region 4 Climate Action Plan](#)
- [MN Climate Action Framework](#)

LOOKING AHEAD: 2026 MOMENTUM

- Launch an AI-powered funding research & grant training series for farmers
- Expand our coordination footprint from 4 to 16 counties
- Deepen regional collaboration with new tools, partners, and shared infrastructure

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS & FUNDERS:



VOICE FROM THE COUNCIL

“We are building something with this council that is entirely approachable and founded on collaboration amongst multiple sectors—showing how it's not only possible but necessary to bridge the producer, processor, and consumer worlds.” - 2025 Food Council Member

LEARN MORE OR GET INVOLVED: [MNFOODCOUNCIL.ORG](https://mnfoodcouncil.org)